

Michigan Team Nutrition

Role Model

Star Awards

STAR AWARD WINNERS:

AWARD	EDUCATOR	FOOD SERVICE STAFF	ADMINISTRATOR	VOLUNTEER
Super Star	Amy Kilgren Howell Public Schools	Martha Powelson Alma Public Schools	Mary Barkley Olivet Community Schools	Renee DeFrang United Lifestyles
Shining Star	Adam Dorland Carsonville Port Sanilac Schools	Katie McConkie Lamphere Schools	Larry Jackson South Lyon Community Schools	
Shining Star	MaryAnn Reardon Woodhaven-Brownstown	Amy Klinkoski Grand Rapids Public Schools	Lori Vinckier Yale Public School District	Gaye Gheller Ironwood Area Schools
Rising Star	Amelia Skwiers Ypsilanti Public Schools	Kathy Gutowski Manistee Area Public Schools	David Hornak Holt Public Schools	Amy Hackman Trinity Lutheran School
Rising Star	Terri Kowalski Sault Area Public Schools	Tanya Nofs L'Anse Creuse Public Schools	Charles Larkins Carson City-Crystal Area Schools	
Rising Star	Kathyleen Parker Adrian Public Schools	Cindy Ribbey Calhoun ISD	Jennifer Davis Warren Consolidated Schools	

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ROLE MODELING SUCCESS STORIES

Every school has a health champion: someone who continuously and tirelessly models healthy eating and physical activity habits; enthusiastically encourages others to do the same; and not only talks the talk, but walks the walk. These people are role models for healthy eating and/or being active in their school or district. Below are their stories, excerpted and abbreviated from information submitted, via an on-line nomination for a Michigan Team Nutrition Healthy Role Modeling Star Award.

Educator Stars

SUPER STAR EDUCATOR:

Amy Kilgren, Howell Public Schools, Howell, MI

Amy is a Family and Consumer Science teacher and the school's Health and Wellness Committee representative. Amy attends monthly meetings with the District's Health & Wellness Committee and has worked to plan and organize activities for Howell Public School District staff and students to promote overall health. Beyond her duties at Highlander Way Middle School, she has spent much of her free time promoting wellness in the Howell community. Amy designed the first Health & Wellness website for the school district and the community! In addition, Amy took on the project of designing a layout and organizing a budget to transform a room at Howell High School into a Health & Wellness Center. This Center is open to all Howell Public Schools (HPS) community members to use. Amy also piloted the first Health & Wellness Club for students who attend Highlander Way Middle School. The club was funded through a NIKE Grant that awarded Amy with \$2,000. Finally, role-modeling for staff is one of the things Amy does best; last year she engaged forty teachers in a wellness competition called the "Biggest Loser."

SHINING STAR #1 EDUCATOR:

Adam Dorland, Carsonville-Port Sanilac Elementary School, Carsonville, MI

Adam Dorland is an elementary physical education teacher who makes physical education a positive learning experience at Carsonville-Port Sanilac (CPS) Elementary School. Adam awards the title of "Peak Performer" to one student each week and announces it to the school during morning announcements. Whenever students leave the gym, he always tells them their homework is to show their parents what they learned and to practice it. Adam went the extra mile organizing and getting students excited about Jump Rope for Heart. Last year, CPS had its biggest year ever in donations due to Adam's excitement and enthusiasm about physical fitness and the Jump Rope for Heart program. The staff at CPS love to eat lunch with Adam because he is always encouraging them to eat healthy and he makes it fun by providing information on what is healthy and what is not. To promote walking, Adam marked off an area on the school playground that is a mile walk. Now lots of classrooms go outside for a daily walk; the students and the teachers love it! Adam has also been very active setting up assemblies that

promote good nutrition and healthy habits. Because of Adam, CPS will be moving recess to before lunch, instead of after lunch, this year. A positive role model himself, Adam has tied good sportsmanship into health and nutrition education. He talks to students about how feeling good about yourself is healthy. Adam is always looking for things to do to promote healthy living. According to his nominator "Adam is a great person to have on staff and their school is lucky to have him."

SHINING STAR #2 EDUCATOR:

Mary Ann Reardon, Woodhaven-Brownstown Bates Elementary School, Woodhaven, MI

Educate, engage and excite is Mary Ann Reardon's approach when teaching students, families and peers – and educating is what MaryAnn does best. Mary Ann has organized an annual event: "Let's Take A Walk" for 15 years, which is held on the last day of school with students, staff, family and friends walking a mile in the neighborhood passing out posters of encouragement and messages for health and wellness. Mary Ann has also facilitated numerous other nutrition education activities and events including: Vote for Your Favorite Fruit, Munch with the Mummy (a Halloween party station where crunchy carrots, kooky cucumbers, terrifying tuna, low fat cheese and whacky-whole wheat crackers are served), Minute Mania, where students log their aerobic fitness minutes, Brain Gym (activities to get kids up and moving during the school day), and she makes use of the Dole Web site's free music and materials any way she can to get kids to enjoy and become engaged in learning how to eat healthier and be more active. In addition, Mary Ann takes time to visit with students in the cafeteria, congratulating them on choosing healthy foods and providing a little nutrition education about what they're eating during her visit. Mary Ann is a big proponent of the EPEC (Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum) which is used for physical education at Bates and which incorporates nutrition education into EPEC reinforcing activities. Mary Ann is a dedicated educator and a positive role model for staff and students. She was a 2002 Olympic Torchbearer for the Salt Lake Torch Relay, has been on the State Standing Committee for Jump Rope for Heart for seven years and is Vice President-Elect for the Physical Education division of MAHPERD. She is 57 years old and bikes, power walks/jogs, swims and still plays flag football at Thanksgiving with her seven brothers, a few of their spouses, her grown children and lots of nieces and nephews.



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RISING STAR #1 EDUCATOR:

Amelia Skwiers, Ypsilanti Public Schools, Ypsilanti, MI

Amelia is an excellent role model for students, staff and families. She works closely with staff to update them on upcoming and emerging health issues and projects and encourages them to exercise before and after school. Amelia started the first ever health class for 6th grade students at West School in 2006, after the school received a grant for exercise equipment and supplies. Amelia worked day and night to make sure the program was informative, innovative and fun. For many of the students, this was the first time they had ever seen or used a treadmill; had the opportunity to lift weights; or would be able to learn about and see the benefit of exercise. Amelia's students became role models for each other when they created and displayed posters throughout the school letting others know about the dangers of drugs and smoking, and the benefits of exercise, drinking milk, and eating healthy foods. Amelia made a point to keep the program interesting and focused on health by bringing in guest speakers and community role models from many local health agencies and organizations including U/M and EMU. West almost lost the program in 2007 because of budget issues, but Amelia worked hard to show the administration the impact her program made on student and school health, and the program was able to continue. Amelia has worked very hard to make her program what it is today, and still continues to battle to keep the program funded every year. Amelia, and West School recently won an award from the Michigan Surgeon General and Michigan Action for Healthy Kids.

RISING STAR #2 EDUCATOR:

Terri Kowalski, Sault Area Public Schools, Sault Area High School, Sault St. Marie, MI

Terri Kowalski is an experienced Nurse Practitioner who works hard to promote school and staff wellness, while running an in-school health clinic for the middle school and high school. The clinic is a busy place that deals with everything from scrapes and cuts to major medical emergencies. Terri is terrific with kids and volunteers her time during after school hours to involve the students in healthy programs and activities. She has an active student advisory group that makes recommendations for the student health clinic. The students and Terri organize weekly discussion groups on topics that the students recommend and are interested in such as eating disorders, smoking, drinking alcohol and more. This year Terri started a 5-2-1 program for kids. The program, which kicked-off with a 5K run that Terri organized, is about making healthy choices: the students strive to eat 5 fruits or vegetables each day, limit their screen time (computer and TV) to less than 2 hours a day, and take part in at least one hour of physical activity every day. Terri has made her program a student-driven success. According to her nominator "The extra things Terri does are not a required part of her job, she just does them because she knows it's the right thing to do."

RISING STAR #3 EDUCATOR:

Kathleen Parker, Adrian Public Schools, Adrian, MI

Kathy Parker is a fantastic role model for the staff and students in Adrian Public Schools. Kathy advocates for staff and student wellness every chance she gets and seeks grants and other funds to continue, sustain, and expand on her efforts. She was responsible for involving Adrian Public Schools in Michiana, a coordinated school health program, and she assisted with seeking and obtaining additional funding for an elementary school to receive the Free Fruit and Vegetable grant, for the MS and HS to build a Fitness Trail, and for nutrition education supplies and training via a Michigan Nutrition Network grant. Kathy also worked with a group of students at the high school and assisted them with writing a grant to improve the physical fitness of students not involved in athletics. This resulted in them being able to offer after-school activities to students at the high school site. On a personal level, Kathy was a leader in developing the school district Local Wellness Policy and bringing staff wellness programs such as Weight Watchers, Pilates, aerobics, and kick-boxing classes to school sites. Kathy role models her commitment to nutrition and physical activity by bringing healthy snacks to meetings and walking 6-8 miles a day. Kathy is definitely a champion for school health!

Food Service Staff Stars

SUPER STAR FOOD SERVICE STAFF:

Martha Powelson, Alma Public Schools, Alma, MI

Martha goes above and beyond her daily responsibilities as Food Service Director to help and educate families, staff, and students on a healthy life style. Martha has started a wellness committee in the school district and is working on improving fundraisers. She has worked tirelessly with the community to get grants and donations to construct a walking trail with exercise equipment between the middle and high schools and to enhance other school and district wellness initiatives. The breakfast and lunch menus at Alma Public Schools are very healthy; they no longer fry foods, everything is baked. Martha purchased a milk vending machine that vends pints of milk and they also have a healthy vending machine that is stocked with milk, fruit, veggies, cheese, yogurt and sandwiches. Martha is a healthy eater herself and a great role model for physical activity; she wears a pedometer every day. She does very well at budgeting and conserving school funds. Martha utilizes all the commodity products and over the past few years has put the school foodservice department in the black. They are one of the fortunate districts to still be self-sufficient. Martha is currently looking into making Alma schools "greener" by reducing the use of Styrofoam. According to her nominator, "Martha Powelson cares about her staff and every student in this district as if they were her own family. Many thanks are due to Martha for a job well done. She doesn't get the recognition she deserves for her tremendous efforts and her dedication."



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SHINING STAR #1 FOOD SERVICE STAFF:

**Katie McConkie, Lamphere Schools,
Madison Heights, MI**

Katie is a role model in more ways than one. One of her former students stated "I can remember the impact Katie had on the schools lunches and also the environment she created while eating at the schools. Now as one of her colleagues, working next to her on school projects such as the Nutrition Fitness and Me clubs, I can see she still has so much to offer!" Katie has raised grant money for school clubs and has provided students and schools with healthy snack options and nutrition education resources. She is always looking for ways to make students and school staff members healthier. Katie is a health champion and was responsible for organizing the first-ever (in Madison Heights) district-wide health fair. There were many organizations present that were able to talk to guests and give out information. The high school health team provided exercise-promoting games and sold team t-shirts at the fair. Last year Katie asked each school in the district to create a Nutrition, Fitness and Me team. One team created and hung posters all over the school to increase health awareness. Last year, Katie asked the United Dairy Industry of Michigan to help hold a Milk Day at the high school. Free milk samples and a student in a cow suit were among the favorite things about Milk Day. Katie's enthusiasm for healthy living has created enthusiasm in students. She is truly someone special.

SHINING STAR #2 FOOD SERVICE STAFF:

**Amy Klinkoski, Grand Rapids Public Schools,
Grand Rapids, MI**

Amy Klinkoski, Food and Nutrition Supervisor for Grand Rapids Public Schools, is an integral part of Grand Rapids Central High School's health and wellness team. Amy helped the team pull together to conduct a health assessment of Central High's needs. The needs were then prioritized and the first major project identified was to change the breakfast and lunch food choices in the cafeteria. Amy was very instrumental in collaborative planning with staff and students to see what could be done to increase flavor, nutritional value and variety. The following successes were a result of the team's collaboration and Amy's positive role modeling as an active team member: A daily fruit and vegetable bar was made available at lunch, all breads and pasta served were (and still are) whole wheat, chips served are baked, only 100% juice and light juices are served, and all milk served is 1%. Amy has conducted taste tests during the lunch hour to introduce students to new foods that will be added to the lunch and breakfast menus. Amy is always adjusting the menu to meet the suggestions of students and staff when possible. In addition, Amy has nutrition information posted in the cafeteria to highlight the benefits of eating a balanced diet. She is a very positive and motivating person who keeps everyone thinking about making healthy food choices.

RISING STAR #1 FOOD SERVICE STAFF:

**Kathy Gutowski, Manistee Area Public Schools,
Manistee, MI**

Many individuals talk about making changes to student nutrition in our public schools and then there are others that take action. Kathy Gutowski from Manistee Area Public Schools is truly not only an action taker but also a leader. In her 5 years as Director of Food Service for the district, she has made numerous changes affecting student health. A few of these are:

1. The Free Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant for four years;
2. Salad bars in all buildings;
3. All buildings serve trans-fat-free meals;
4. Vending machines with candy eliminated; a milk vending machine added;
6. Pop machines turned off during the school day, water sold during the day;
7. All meals meet dietary guidelines, nutrition information posted;
8. Consortium buying for commodities;
9. Implementation of a Farm to School program.

According to her nominator "Kathy is a leader in the state in the world of healthy student choices. As a superintendent, I can think of no one in this area that has done more for our students' health".

RISING STAR #2 FOOD SERVICE STAFF:

**Tanya Nofs, L'Anse Creuse Public Schools, Clinton
Township, MI**

Tanya is the Food and Nutrition Supervisor for L'Anse Creuse Public Schools. Tanya juggles ten elementary schools, four middle schools, and two high schools; with enthusiasm and high spirits. She has strived to meet the weight challenges that our children face today. For the elementary schools last year, Tanya dressed up as a "food cheerleader" which she designed herself. She and a group of high school cheerleaders visited elementary schools where they led cheers, played games, and presented information that taught young students to eat their fruits and vegetables, from A-Z. She made learning about good health fun for kids. As a foodservice director, Tanya is concerned about the health of all the students in her district. Last year, she worked hard to make a school "peanut safe" and today continues to cater to the specific needs of several diabetic students so they are able to purchase hot, healthy school meals. According to her nominator: "If anyone can reach our future with a healthy message, it's Tanya Nofs."

RISING STAR #3 FOOD SERVICE STAFF:

Cindy Ribbey, Calhoun ISD, Marshall, MI

In January of 2003, Cindy Ribbey joined the Calhoun County Juvenile Home's Administrative Team filling the position of Food Service Manager. From the beginning, Cindy began revamping the food service program by creatively planning menus that



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provide residents with healthier meals while staying within the Michigan Department of Education guidelines. Cindy possesses extensive knowledge of the nutrition requirements of the State of Michigan, food preparation and the food handling requirements of the local Health Department. Cindy's dedication and willingness to serve the youth is exemplified by her development and implementation of the Healthy Facilities Committee. The committee meets monthly to plan events that create an environment that promotes healthy eating and physical activities for the residents. In addition, according to Cindy's nominator, she is always willing to sit down and talk with residents and staff regarding healthy eating habits and the effects of making good food choices. Cindy is known by the residents and the staff for going the extra mile when a resident has special dietary needs, whether medically related, due to illness, or otherwise. On a personal level, Cindy is a very active, health-conscious person. Even after working all day preparing food and cleaning up, Cindy walks each evening. She is conscious about her eating habits, is often seen eating a salad for lunch, and she also makes this option available for staff upon request.

Administrator Stars

SUPER STAR ADMINISTRATOR:

Mary Barkley, Fern Persons Elementary School, Olivet, MI

Mary empowers staff, parents, and students to discover means for achieving a healthy lifestyle which will translate into better academic performance and emotional growth. When a teacher wanted an afterschool running program, Mary supported the idea. She ran with the kids and provided them with healthy snacks. Mary saw the correlation between increased coordination and the confidence and ability to learn: the result was a jump rope club. Kindergarten teachers were encouraged to run a summer camp to teach motor and social skills to the incoming classes. A staff member was empowered to present the "classroom healthy snacks policy" to parents at Kindergarten registration and Mary applauded her creativity. Mary's every action with the students and staff in her school encourages them to do their best and live well. To Mary, example and action speak louder than words; she has devoted the last five years to guiding the district wellness committee volunteers to set and meet goals, create and follow a wellness policy, and organize four community Healthy Kids Summits. She has orchestrated wellness training for staff professional development days. Mary has successfully written a second Kellogg Foundation grant to fund kindergarten camps, "Healthy Kids Summits" and other wellness projects. Mary Barkley is a role model for kids, families, and staff in her promotion and support of healthy lifestyles. She has been the reason why an afterschool fitness program for girls, Kids on the Move, has been so popular and effective. Mary offers advice, space, supervision, and support. According to her nominator, "Mary's leadership is invaluable. She sees the real

need for programs in our district that will help students have healthy bodies before they enter adolescence so that they can maintain those habits through their adult lives."

SHINING STAR #1 ADMINISTRATOR:

Larry Jackson, South Lyon East High School, South Lyon, MI

Larry Jackson believes in healthy food choices for the students at South Lyon East High School. Before the school year began, he hired a dietitian to review the menu items and mark them with green, yellow or red nutrition labels so the students could easily determine which foods contained higher amounts of fat, sugar or sodium. Mr. Jackson also gathered a team of students for a taste test of higher fiber, lower fat foods to determine which of these new offerings were most acceptable to our students. As the students sampled the products, Mr. Jackson talked about the various nutrients found in certain foods. As a result of the student taste test, our school now offers healthier items that the students enjoy such as: a salmon burger, low-fat submarine sandwiches, and breakfast sandwiches, all served on whole wheat buns or bread. Students have been delighted to see and be able to choose from a wide variety of fresh vegetables and fruits offered daily at school.

SHINING STAR #2 ADMINISTRATOR:

Lori Vinckier, Yale Public School District, Yale, MI

Life-long Yale residents recognize Board member, Lori Vinckier, as a positive role model and leader in healthy living. Mrs. Vinckier uses her strong leadership qualities to encourage student participation in healthy eating and physical activities. According to Lori's nominator, Not only does Mrs. Vinckier live by healthy standards, she is recognized throughout the community as a leader in nutrition and exercise. To combat inactive winter months, she pursued and was awarded a Coca Cola grant. Using resources from the grant, she implemented an after-school sports program in Yale Schools to encourage students to move. When not being used for organized sports, the junior high gym was transformed into an activity center with students playing volleyball and basketball when the snow flew. As chairman of the Board of Education Nutrition Committee, Lori emphasizes the need for healthy eating. She has spearheaded the Board's renovation of nutrition guidelines and has actively participated in reviewing the school lunch program to ensure students are provided the most healthy meals and snacks. Lori Vinckier proves through her words and actions that being healthy with good nutrition and physical activity is key to becoming a successful adult.

RISING STAR #1 ADMINISTRATOR:

David Hornak, Holt Public Schools, Holt, MI

David Hornak is a new principal who is making an obvious effort to instill healthy habits in students. He is very involved during lunch time and assists the students in making healthy choices



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and eating healthy lunches. He is very visible during recess and in the halls to let the kids know that he cares about their fitness, exercise and health. He has initiated a 5K family night at our school. He is a runner and a soccer coach; and, health and fitness are a personal goal for his family. He is a great role model and leader in the fight against child obesity.

RIISING STAR #2 ADMINISTRATOR:

Charles Larkin, Carson City Middle/High School, Carson City, MI

Mr. Larkins is a fantastic role model who students can and do learn from. He arrives early each morning to work out with students in the weight room then starts the school day by supervising and playing along with students during an open gym time each morning. Mr. Larkins is in the cafeteria during lunches and encourages students to select fruits and vegetables from the salad bar. He also eats lunch with students and talks to them about making good meal choices, pointing out how good fruits and salads look and how it's ok to have treats sometimes, but to balance those things by adding some healthy choices. He sets a positive example for healthy eating and physical activity and is a strong cheerleader and partner in the school's food service program as well as the district's athletics program. He is also a member of the school district's wellness committee and assisted with the development of their Local Wellness Policy.

RIISING STAR #3 ADMINISTRATOR:

Jennifer Davis, Jefferson Elementary School, Sterling Heights, MI

Healthy Choices! That's the theme at Jefferson Elementary School. Principal, Jennifer Davis, saw the need to provide students with more opportunities to learn about and practice making healthy food and physical activity choices. After searching for a comprehensive after-school curriculum designed for both boys and girls, Ms. Davis decided to create her own 12-week program. Fifty students in grades 3, 4 and 5 participated in SimplyRun! For Kids, a running club. Meetings began with a healthy snack and a lesson on nutrition, which included topics such as healthy snacks, portion size, and nutrition for runners. Students and parents worked together to fill out a "Home Journal" where they recorded healthy foods eaten and physical activity done at home. Two years ago, students in the club began asking for healthier choices at lunch. Nutrition Services worked with Jefferson to implement the first salad bar at an elementary school in our district. Ms. Davis also created a "Training Table", which is a place for students in the running club to eat lunch together and encourage and role model healthy food choices such as choosing foods from the salad bar. Through these efforts, the students, staff, and parents have become much better at making healthy choices both in school and at home!

Volunteer Stars

SUPER STAR VOLUNTEER:

Renee DeFrang, United Lifestyles Nutrition Director, Greenville, MI

Renee has worked tirelessly over the past two years on the Greenville Public Schools wellness committee and has been instrumental in the development and implementation of the wellness policy. All of her hours were volunteer hours. Renee is a role model for proper nutrition and physical activity. In other words, she walks the walk. The schools just completed a 5k run/walk that brought over 300 people to a new event and Renee was responsible for its success. In addition she has educated many students/athletes in their quest for healthy living. As a registered dietitian she has selflessly dedicated thousands of hours to the health and well-being of our community. As a result of her hard-work, the Greenville Public Schools received an award from Michigan Action for Healthy Kids. Renee is very goal-driven, and each year has run a marathon to maintain her dedication to wellness. In addition, she helps others to find a healthy balance between proper nutrition and physical activity.

SHINING STAR #1 VOLUNTEER:

Gaye Gheller, Ironwood Area Schools, LL Wright MS and HS, Ironwood, MI

Gaye is a most active parent-volunteer. She is involved with the high school cross country team and leads many of the local fundraisers, which are tantamount to funding the pay-to-play sport for many of the student-athletes who run. She is also a mentor for our 6th grade girls' After School program. She leads many of the activities including walking, running and weight lifting. She also assists in arranging for the group to attend karate, yoga and other fitness activities. Gaye is an excellent role model for the girls she mentors. She is an excellent runner and mountain biker. She is a healthy eater and a promoter of healthy living. Her time and commitment to bettering the lives of students in Ironwood's middle and high schools are exemplary.

RIISING STAR #1 VOLUNTEER:

Amy Hackman, Trinity Lutheran School

Amy is a school parent who is also a nurse practitioner. Amy developed a school nutrition program and once a month teaches a 30-45 minute nutrition class in each classroom in the school. She has greatly raised student interest in, awareness about, and enthusiasm for nutrition education and choosing and eating healthy foods. Amy was instrumental in creating a school student wellness council that works on nutrition- and health-related improvements at school. Trinity Lutheran School is a healthier place to be and the students are making better food choices because of Amy's dedication and commitment.

